AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 25 of the Substitute Specification with the following amended paragraph:

Figure 1 shows a block diagram of the preferred exemplary embodiment which includes sensors 10, 12, 14, a processing unit 16, and NIR headlights 18. Sensors 10, 12, 14 are situated, as explained below with reference to Figure 2, on a motor vehicle. In the preferred exemplary embodiment, four ultrasound sensors 10 are used as sensors 10, 12, 14. Alternatively or additionally, a radar sensor 12 and/or a video sensor 14 are shown. Sensors 10 monitor the illumination range of NIR headlights 18 fully, at least in its width. In the preferred exemplary embodiment, video sensor 14 and NIR headlights 18 are components of a night vision system which is supplemented by a display device for displaying information of video sensor 14 to the driver. In the preferred exemplary embodiment, a CMOS video camera is used; alternatively or additionally, a CCD video camera may be used in one variant. For the night view function, the spectral range above the visible spectrum (380 nm – 780 nm) and within the sensitivity range of CCD or CMOS video cameras (approximately 350 nm – 1100 nm because of the spectral sensitivity of silicon), i.e., between 780 nm and 1100 nm, is relevant in particular. Because of the sensitivity range of the video camera, NIR IR-A in particular is therefore relevant for the night view function. In principle, any radiation source whose spectral range contains at least the NIR IR-A range or portions thereof may be used. In the preferred exemplary embodiment, headlights having halogen bulbs with a color temperature between 3200 K and 3400 K, whose spectral range is limited by interference filters or absorption filters to the near infrared range between approximately 780 nm and 1200 nm are used as NIR headlights 18. In one variant of the preferred exemplary embodiment, laser headlights are used as NIR headlights 18. In a further variant, an array of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) is used as NIR headlights 18, also in conjunction with tail lights of the vehicle. In the presence of one or more objects, the sensors generate sensor signals which are transmitted via signal lines 20 to processing unit 16. Processing unit 16 contains a plurality of function modules 40~~, 42, 44, 46~~ shown in Figure 3. Function modules 40~~, 42, 44, 46~~ are implemented as programs and/or program steps of at least one microprocessor in processing unit 16 and/or via programmable logic, in particular as ASIC and/or FPGA. Processing unit 16 generates setting signals of NIR headlights 18, which are transmitted via

signal lines 20, the radiation intensity and/or the function of the headlight being regulated and/or controlled. The sensor data and control data is transmitted via signal lines 20 electrically and/or optically and/or by wireless transmission, signal lines 20 being a single-wire line and/or a 2-wire line and/or a multiwire line. In particular, signal lines 20 are designed alternatively or additionally as a bus line such as a CAN bus, or the signals are modulated onto the supply lines via power line communication.